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ABSTRACT

This 1972 evaluation report of East High School's Senior Seminar, a program for seniors based on the philosophy that on-site, direct-involvement experiences become the basis for learning and broadening the student's perceptual environment, includes narrative descriptions of the various Seminar learning modules as well as the results of questionnaires submitted to the 100 participants of the Seminar, to a control group of 31 randomly selected seniors, and to parents of the participants. Descriptive material is provided for each of the modules (e.g., Outward Bound-Mexico, Power and Politics, Urban Arts, Navajo, Chicano, and St. Louis). The report also includes comments from student journals when they help illustrate the question being asked in the questionnaire. The evaluation report indicates a positive response and enthusiasm for the program by the 93 participants and the 49 parents who responded. It concludes with suggestions for strengthening the Seminar through commitment from the school district, through specifically developed curriculum, and through communication with parents and faculty. (CM)

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SENIOR SEMINAR 1972

AN EVALUATION OF AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAM AT EAST HIGH SCHOOL DENVER, COLORADO

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SENIOR SEMINAR 1972

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Report of a joint venture by

EAST HIGH SCHOOL
COLORADO OUTWARD BOUND
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

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and
Emil Zeigler

FOREWARD

One student's perception of Senior Seminar:

"It is really a miraculous experience to walk into East High after a trip or module with the seminar, and there you are walking in the hallways and you just know and feel that you have changed...Ah, then you return to the seminar room with the familiar and welcoming faces of your brothers and sisters---family (that is what we are, for we grew up, and together), you can just see it in their eyes, the peacefulness they have discovered within themselves and with others. Their doors have been opened, and now we are absorbing all we can see and feel.

The mountains, ocean, beach, solo, live-in, river, dancing, acting, plastic furniture, environmental disasters, these are only classifications of experiences and a very minute part. Each module gave new thoughts, ideas, concepts opening a new world accompanied with a new day, but to see for the first time every day. It was too much and yet too little. It wasn't just the learning, but the security, knowing people cared, the openness, stabs, it was all sensitivity. We were never forced to do anything, but we <u>wanted</u> to do something even though we could have very easily turned our backs--not anyone could accomplish this; but the seminar did, and we all made it."

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I. Introduction

"Beauty is scattered meanings--
Loving the people I'm with,
Being the mountains I see,
Feeling the sky in my body.

Crystal boxes, alabaster sand,
Loneliness to the depth of being free,
Embracing the sea with brown body
And feeling every fantastic muscle in my body
Being teased by the sun
If the only price was sand drenched hair
And a hunger in my belly,
Let me suffer forever."

(From a student's journal)

WHAT IS THE SENIOR SEMINAR? - a school in living for life.

Semester Long - comprising the last half of the senior year for 100 students.

Large Time Block Scheduling - allowing an indepth study of phenomena by fitting time allotments to the educational task rather than cramming learning into forty-five minutes of a segmented day.

Field School - where academics are related to direct experiences ranging from living with Navajo Indians to collecting trash with the city sanitary crews.

Multi-disciplinary Teams of Teachers - who bring the orientation of their disciplines to bear on all of the field experience to help students develop a unified view of their physical and social environments.

Involving Outward Bound - the challenges of nature and group survival in an Outward Bound Course during the first block and a river raft trip in the last month.

Small Group Process - living in heterogeneous primary group units of twelve students and a teacher each reflecting the broad economic and social milieu that is East High.

Involving the University of Colorado - where each Seminar teacher has a full-time student teacher from the University who works side by side with the teacher throughout the Seminar.

Time Block Scheduling for Field Study

In order to develop the concept of direct field experience education within the Seminar, the normal school semester is divided into six two-and-a-half to three week long blocks of time. In each block students investigate such areas as Navajo culture, politics, and power and urban arts; take geology

and adventure-oriented raft trips down the rapids of the Yampa and Green Rivers in Western Colorado; and participate in an Outward Bound type wilderness course consisting of climbing, hiking, and a three-day solo.

Personal and Interpersonal Growth

Heavy emphasis is placed on the development of positive interpersonal relationships within the racially and socially mixed primary groups. In these groups students participate in the Outward Bound course, run the river, travel to the Navajo Reservation where they live and perform daily chores with Indian families and live in the intense urban atmosphere of St. Louis. There is no escape when you are in the field with a group of fellow students all of whom depend upon the same sources of survival - food, shelter, and transportation. Though seemingly tenuous at times, the really significant growth comes out of such stressful social environments. One girl's final evaluation statement is a graphic illustration of this process.

> "....I got so I hated riding on that damn yellow bus and listening to the bullshitting that went around like a disease. A lot of times I felt very lonely because I didn't trust a lot of people because they didn't seem committed to anything or anyone. I was sort of trying to protect myself from having all that rub off on me.
>
> It's only now that the realization of leaving seminar is hitting me. And it's only now that I'm finding out how much it is a part of me and how much I really dug it. I've gotten closer than ever before to people in a learning situation. And I've learned from them even more than I've learned from the sources we sought for information and example. I've learned new depths in feeling people and understanding them since Mexico. I've learned a lot about life and myself. I've found out that it's going to be that way--learning and growing--for the rest of my life...."

Academics in the Real World

The academic body of the Senior Seminar builds upon direct field experience as a base and the wide utilization of resource persons and agencies. The process of political decision-making, for instance, is studied while students meet in a committee room at the state legislature. From that "classroom" students attend legislative and committee sessions, interview lawmakers and lobbyists, and do independent indepth study projects centered on current issues. In the Communications module the students focused on writing as a means of expression as well as a means of communication. The students wrote poetry, sketches, short plays, essays. Simple sentences, at one point, were emphasized to point out the importance of mechanics, clarity, and grace of expression.

Whenever possible, the philosophy of the Seminar dictates that on-site, direct-involvement experiences become the basis for learning and broadening the student's perceptual environment.

> "Today we went to the quarry at the Dinosaur National monument. There was a very interesting display of the geological time eras and the existing life of each time. I was immediately shocked to find

that I had studied many of the same things in biology last semester and, therefore, I could relate to the previous knowledge. It had a much greater meaning to me and it made me feel good."

Target Students - college orientation

Twenty-five per cent of the students comprise a specially-selected group who are seen by their counselors as having potential for post-high school academic work but who are presently dropouts or near dropouts. For these "Target Students," selected mostly from minority ethnic groups, special efforts are made to encourage continuing education.

In 1970 seventeen of the twenty-five, all Black, enrolled in college. Of the thirteen who started at the University of Colorado in a special program designed for minority students, ten still are enrolled, two are in junior college, and one is in trade school.

Teachers

"Besides the fantastic and beautiful relationship which developed, the Seminar was a constant learning process for me: 1) group interactions-personality clashes, individualists; group pressures and self-centered people; and 2) new areas of learning--the Navajo Indians, city pollution, city problems and development, and different areas of art, and actual activities in the Capitol."

-Teacher

"....As I lay watching the stars, I tried to put my finger on exactly what made the Seminar so 'successful.' Everyone who was involved with it felt that way. I wondered what exactly had caused all the enthusiasm and tremendous exuberance in a group of high school kids about a school program when many of these same students could barely drag themselves to school for a regular classroom hour, when many of them previously had been just counting the days until they could get out of high school.

I know a part of the answer--a big part. There was trust and friendship. At the beginning of the Seminar, we, the teachers, eliminated our last names. I was Ann to the students, not Mrs. Kimball. This is a small matter to be sure, but it gave each teacher an 'in.' It told the students we wanted to feel closer to them, we wanted to become friends. It cut the formality. It was one human encountering another human saying, let me get to know you. We were not standing at a distance with a bagful of 'things to teach them.' We were saying you are interesting to me, I like to be around you, maybe we can learn and share some things together. I'll show you who I am and you can trust me with the knowledge of yourself. We made ourselves vulnerable."

-Student Teacher

The Seminar staff, consisting of four contract teachers, four full-time student teachers, and a project coordinator, sees the program as thoroughly demanding in emotional and time commitment, but immensely fulfilling in the sense of what teaching should be all about.

Sample Starter-Operations Budget
Cost data for getting the Seminar started and running it for one semester

Category	Gross Value Resource Allocation	Amounts Chargeable if Regular Program was Operant or Amoritization Credits	Identified Seminar Costs
Salaries			
5 teachers at 50% of annual pay	$26,990	- $21,592 4 teachers at 50% of annual pay	$5,398
Project Coordinator ½ time 1st sem.	2,699	Paid by Outward Bound	2,699
Senior Seminar Staff extra compensation	4,000	-	4,000
Clerical	600	-	600
	$34,289	$21,592	$12,697
Transportation			
Bus #327	$ 2,062 (Repairs)		$ 2,062
Purchased used 1970 - $3,000	2,400	- 1,800	600
Bus #339	546 (Repairs)		546
Purchased by Kettering Found.Fund	8,264	- 7,438	826
Bus #340	375 (Repairs)		375
Kettering & East High Funds	2,500 (Lease)		2,500
	$16,147	- $9,238	$ 6,909
Furniture and Equipment	129	- 116	13
Supplies & Misc. Expense	11,547	- 3,666 (Reusable Supplies)	7,881
Insurance	550	-	550
Net Cost	$62,662	34,612	28,050
Number of pupils participating - 110			
Gross Additional Cost Per Pupil			255

Income Sources

Budgeted by Denver Public Schools	$16,820
East High Funds (including student contributions)	6,000
Kettering Foundation Grant	10,000
	$32,820

Specific Cost Data -Out-of-town Modules

Module	N Pupils	Estimated Subsistence Costs	Estimated Transportation Costs*	Total	Subsistence-Transportation Cost per Pupil
Mexico	109	$3,213	$1,800	$5,013	$46
Navajo Res.	80	2,250	550	2,800	35
River	104	1,650	525	2,175	21
St. Louis	48	621	550	1,171	24
Chicano	43	284	300	584	14

*Based upon cost estimate of twenty-five cents per mile. Seminar teaching staff functioned also as bus drivers.

Sample Operations Budget

Cost data for a semester of running the Seminar

The budget for 1972 makes provision for specific identification costs related to the East High Seminar. The identification occurs by the use of "804" in the last three digits of the account codes. Listed below are the account numbers and the amounts approved for 1972:

00 451 252 1210 804	One Regular Teacher - 5 months	$ 5,000
00 451 252 1261 804	Extra Pay for Regular Teachers	4,250
00 451 220 1314 804	Part-time Clerical Personnel	600
	Total Salaries	$ 9,850
00 451 252 3000 804	Books, Supplies, and Other Expense	6,530
		$16,380

These allocations are in addition to the usual budget amounts for East High School.

SENIOR SEMINAR
Sample Module Schedule

Block I	Outward Bound - Mexico Three Phases		All Units & Staff	Monday, February 1 - Tuesday, February 23
Block II	Urban Arts Elective 48 Students		Politics and Power Elective 60 Students	Thursday, February 25 Tuesday, March 16

Wednesday, March 17 - Unit Day

Block III	Independent Study 16 Students	Navajo I 48 Students	Chicano I 36 Students	St. Louis I - 24 Students	Thursday, March 18 - Friday, April 2

Spring Vacation

Block IV	Independent Study 16 Students	Navajo II 48 Students	Chicano II 36 Students	St. Louis II - 24 Students	Monday, April 12 - Wednesday, April 28

Block V	River A 3 Units Mon., May 3 - Wed., May 12	Communications 36 Students (Same as River C Mon., May 3 - Fri., May 21		Eastern Culture 36 Students (Same as River B) Mon., May 3 - Tues., May 11
Block VI	River B 3 Units Thurs., May 13 - Sat., May 22		Montana 36 Students (Same as River A) Friday, May 14 - Thurs., June 3	
Block VII	River C 3 Units Mon., May 24 - Wed., June 2			Dance 36 Students (Same as River B) Tuesday, May 24 - Thurs., June 3

Friday, June 4
Final Evaluation Day

II. Outward Bound - Mexico Module

"In eight days we saw the ocean, swam in it and washed in it, built fires by it, slept by it and ran along its shores. We also climbed a mountain range. In the same eight days we were alone for 48 hours, surviving only with matches, a canteen of water, a sleeping bag and toilet paper."

Excerpt from
student journal

Outward Bound - Mexico Module

The idea of starting the Seminar with an Outward Bound experience in Mexico was done in the hopes of establishing some strong group relationships and experiences for students which hopefully would be continued throughout the semester. Within each patrol (12 students and one teacher) were students of diverse economic, and cultural backgrounds. The hope is that students within each group will become sensitive enough to each other to see the similarities among themselves and to become aware and appreciative of their differences. In addition, it was hoped they would learn to reach out to others, and in doing so, develop a consciousness of man's relationship to society and to all men. Students also were forced to relate to themselves--in a sense defining themselves throughout the course. This is especially evident in such activities as rock climbing and rapelling where students became intensely aware of themselves in the process of conquering their fears and apprehensions. Many students gained a level of self confidence they never thought attainable.

Through such activities as rock climbing, rapelling, backpacking, wilderness ecology, camping, group initiative tests, interaction and confrontation became a daily event. Students began to see the importance of relying on the groups, in sharing experiences--often work, helping one another accomplish goals (such as finding a stash of food on a desert en route to a Seri Indian village). Learning to live together cooperatively as a group became an important learning experience as it demanded sensitivity to each others needs, feelings and personal differences and similarities. Making group decisions and committing themselves to the workings of the group as a whole became a goal toward which all worked.

The initiative tests involving the entire patrol really were successful in solidifying and strengthening the group experience, as the entire group worked together to solve a problem and felt a great deal of satisfaction in accomplishing their tasks. More of these type of experiences should be included on further trips. Most students learned to read maps and use a compass during their 17-mile hike. They participated in a workshop lab in first aid during the course. For many students seeing the ocean was new and the excitement and enthusiasm of discovering starfish, various shells, and a multitude of sea life provided a beautiful introduction to the course. They did two additional days of studying oceanography and marine biology, exploring an estuary filled with varieties of sponges, sea slugs, crabs and octupus. These two days could have been more stimulating had we had more of an opportunity to explore other areas of the coast and perhaps with more knowledgeable resource people assisting us.

Prior to the departure for Mexico, students and teachers had an opportunity to take part in an experimental program designed to teach the basics of working Spanish. This crash course that involved an intensive learning experience for only one weekend proved highly worthwhile. The first stop in a town across the Mexican Border provided all the motivation and stimulus for most students to enhance their knowledge of the language. The need and desire to communicate with people in the town, in shops, along the streets, encouraged many students to help each other learn as much Spanish as possible. Watching this occur and seeing

the determination of many students who have had difficulty even staying in school, one could not imagine that type of self motivation occurring in a classroom with 30 students and a teacher. Another exciting thing occurred as those students and student teachers without any previous knowledge of Spanish were being asked constantly to share their knowledge. For the next week, the bus became a working Spanish lab, and this continued until the live-ins in Hermosillo, at which point many students experienced an even more intense and demanding absorption of the language. During the next three weeks, students developed a working knowledge of survival Spanish which would be the equivalent of at least two semesters Spanish class at East. In the Seri Indian villages and in Bahia Kino students bartered in Spanish, bought shrimp and crabs from fishermen, learned to do math in another language, and were exposed to an almost extinct group of Indians especially known for their beautiful wood carvings. Many students observed and spoke to these artists.

The solo experience provided possibly the only time in an individual's life when he may be completely alone with himself for three days. This experience is very personal--not something any two people experience alike. The hope is that it gives the student the opportunity to reflect on his experiences and his relationships to the group, to mankind, and the world in general. Alone at his solo site he somehow must come to grips with himself and his place on this earth--even his relationship to the past--to the earth, the rocks, water and the sky and perhaps in doing so reaffirm his place among other men. The solo experience this year for many students was not as successful as it could have been. The importance of remaining alone and not disturbing others' experiences was not stressed enough and as a result many students did not spend the full time alone.

The live-in with Mexican families in Hermosillo proved an exciting venture into language, culture, and a life style quite difference from our own. Students lived with families for three days and during this time became exposed and familiar with a traditional Mexican city. Many were, for the first time, confronted with the Spanish language as their only means of communication. They visited and attended classes at school with their hosts, traveled via foot and autobus into the city, shopped and became a part of a family. This part of the course was especially positive in terms of international relations and human relations. The Mexican people overwhelmed the students with kindness and acceptance, opening their hearts and homes to them. In turn the students were encouraged to attempt to communicate with them in their own language. The response from students on the success of the live-ins was positive. They had the opportunity to compare life styles, the extremes of poverty and wealth, to compare family structures, and employment problems of the Mexican people. Since the trip, there has been an exchange where 20 of their students came to Denver to live with families. This is a good indication of the relationship with the people of Hermosillo.

III. Power and Politics Module

"I am finding that I have to get into the workings of the government if I want to see any changes. I mean that after seeing and listening to people that do things to better cities--that if people want changes--they have to change them instead of letting 'them' do it."

Excerpt from
student journal

Power and Politics

Power and Politics proved to be an excellent learning experience. It was a glimpse of the political process and of politicians that the students' parents never got. It was a lesson in civics that no high school civics book ever put across. Some students have commented that they learned more on this module than any other. The strengths of the module were in outstanding activities, a definite focus and a well-organized schedule.

The activities included simulation games, visits to Buena Vista, the Denver County Jail, and the various State, local and Federal courts, speakers from the District Attorney's office, the Public Defender's Office, and Common Cause. There were two panels. One was on the role of the church in the community and the other on the role of education in the community. Through these activities students came to have an understanding on what political power is, how it is used, and how it may be obtained. Students also gained an idea of the complexity of the issue of who has the power and also a certain optimism in that it is possible for them to gain power and effect change.

Rather than keep a journal, students were required to write answers to specific questions about each activity. This gave students a focus for each activity. The results were very positive. Student interest in the speakers increased and many questions were asked. Visits to the courts and prisons were very effective in stimulating student interest in the legal system and criminal rehabilitation. One student indicated that based on his experience he plans to go to college and become a social worker, hopefully in the penal system.

The module could have been improved if it had been more tightly structured around a particular theme or themes. Also, more time should have been set aside for group discussions. This would have allowed for time to tie to the various experiences together.

In summation, power and politics was a good example of how field experiences can be utilized to teach effectively without going out of town.

IV. Urban Arts Module

"I don't know how to say it, but I'm learning. I take so many things for granted. The metal sculptures are hard guys to put together and then people like me are the ones that walk by them in art museums and say, 'Oh my, isn't that quaint?' And then walk on to the next before one can blink his own eye."

Excerpt from
student journal.

Urban Arts Module

Urban arts was an attempt to expose students to the rich cultural advantages of the city. It was an attempt to broaden the students concept of art in the hopes of getting students to pursue in depth study. Urban arts was an attempt to have students more fully understand the drive that an artist has to be creative and the sacrifices he often has to make to pursue this creativity.

In attempting to reach these goals the following resources and activities were used:

Bob Mangold - Visit his metal sculpture studio. Students had an opportunity to discuss with him his philosophy of art and understand the difficulties of making a living as an artist. Students understood the techniques of metal sculpture.

Tom McCluskey - Music teacher at Temple Buell College. Three two-hour sessions in the origins of Rock and Roll. A tape, record, lecture and piano demonstration, from the blues, from jazz and from folk music to present day Rock and Roll. Students learned about the history of music and music theory.

Hal Shelton - Internationally known cartographer. Foothill Art Center. Visits to his home and studio where he discussed the techniques of map making and his philosophy of maps as a form of communication.

Channel 6 - Tour of television studio and review of an experimental film.

Vern Langhoffer - Batic and weaving demonstration at Metro Youth Center. Students learned about several methods of weaving and batic.

Jerry Endsley - Musician, Denver Symphony. Demonstration of ancient and modern trumpets. A discussion of the history of music.

Denver Art Museum - A visit to a kinetic art sculpture show. A study of gravity and balance.

Bev Rossen - Painter. Visit to her studio and a discussion of her philosophy of art. Students learned about painting techniques.

Homer Brown - Model cities cultural art theatre. A discussion of the history of jazz with a jazz ensemble.

Norman Thomson - Dance teacher, Temple Buell. Students observed a ballet class. Discussed the concept of self discipline involved in the dancers drive to reach perfection. Students were shown some of the basic steps of modern ballet. An interpretive discussion of the American Theatre Ballet the students were to see.

American Theatre Ballet - The River. Nationwide ballet company on tour. Students were able to see top professionals in the field of dance.

Bob Ragland - Prominent Black artist - Model cities. Students participated in an evening painting workshop involving a slide talk on painting. Students brought their own paintings, followed by a critique.

Liz Schoeberlein - Teacher, Temple Buell Painter. A slide talk on her work and how she has become a painter. The students learned how an artist changes over the years. Afterwards the students visited her home to see more of her art.

Macrame Class - Three-hour workshop on the beginning of macrame. Students each make their own macrame project.

Painting - A three-hour workshop outdoors in painting a group mural.

The module met the aforementioned objectives successfully using the above activities. Additional time for pulling together, through discussion, the concepts and stimulants encountered each day, would have strengthened the module. Students felt the need for additional time to pursue the artistic areas that stimulated them. The module was successful in exposing the students to a wide variety of artists including many ethnic groups.

V. Navajo Module

"God, I did not know that sheep were so filthy, -goddam they are about the filthiest animals in the world. The people are nice--the food is good--and you work your ass off--."

From a student's journal.

Navajo Module

The Navajo live-in is an opportunity for the students to be immersed in a culture very different from their own. It is an opportunity to experience the life style of the traditional Navajo and understand the pressures of modern day life on the Navajo way. Upon arriving at the Rock Point Boarding School, the students spend two days prior to their live-ins studying the educational system on the Reservation and visiting the National MonumentCanyon deChelly, which is rich in the history of the conflict between the United States Government and the Navajo people. TheCanyon also is rich in Indian history and art.

For eight days the students lived with Navajo families, either alone or in pairs. The students were expected to take part in family life. Students lived either in Navajo hogans or in reservation homes. Many learned to take care of herds of sheep, goats; shearing wool; repairing fences, carpentry and planting. Most students prepared meals and often learned to cook with the bare minimum--mutton and government supplied canned goods. From the women, students learned about the arts of dying, carding and spinning and weaving Navajo rugs and blankets.

Many students lived with families that spoke only Navajo and there was an exchange of learning involved in communicating. Some students had the opportunity to participate and observe some Navajo ceremonial sings. The stories of the Navajo evolution and other Navajo folklore were shared with the students.

Reception of students on the Reservation has been very good. Most students have very successful live-ins and find the module one of the most rewarding experiences of the Senior Seminar.

VI. Chicano Module

"in order for anything to work out, we must all work together not matter what color, age __"

Excerpt from
student journal

Chicano Module

The purposes of the Chicano module were to learn more about cultural groups and at the same time more about ourselves and our relationships with others. In addition, the students observed and took part in solving some of the problems of Chicanos.

Two of the five days were spent in town talking with people about Chicano problems and solutions to these problems. Emphasis was placed on housing, education and organization with the Chicano community along with learning some background of their history.

Back in Denver the students spent part of an afternoon at the Crusade for Justice, having lunch and talking with a member of the organization. Students learned about their school and the Crusade's role in the community, which is that of helping to find jobs for people and counseling them on their rights as citizens.

Another afternoon was spent at the West Side Action Center with Craig Hart. He described the role of the Action Center in dealing with community problems. He discussed housing problems created by the Auraria Center in Denver, the Olympics as a possible source of low income housing, the meaning of a barrio and location of these in Denver. This seemed successful in arousing students to discuss openly their feeling about the Chicano community and possible solutions to their problems.

The trip to New Mexico to work at the cooperative and People's Clinic was oriented toward giving students an opportunity to see people working cooperatively in order to help others less fortunate with medical aid, legal aid, counseling, and health and nutrition. The people working at the clinic have successfully and positively found a way to raise the standard of living, and at the same time encourage pride among the poor people in that area of the country.

From a student's journal after observing people working together: "in order for anything to work out we must all work together no matter what color, age..." The realization that when people work together to solve problems, something positive can happen was one of the most important learning experiences of New Mexico. This trip was also intended as a group experience for the students and two teachers were to live and work together for five days. It was hoped that this communal experience would bring about some positive relationships among a diverse group of people.

Students lived on several different farms outside of Tierra Amarilla, which the clinic uses for friends or visitors. All the cooking was done on a wood stove and all water had to be pumped from a well outside the house. Students all shared in these chores and many of our most meaningful dialogues and communications took place near the wood stove, keeping warm and waiting for a meal. Students were given a tour of the clinic which provides emergency care, X-Ray facilities, maternity rooms, dental care and general medical attention for the poor. They were

building two additions to the clinic and a cooperative. The clinic also circulates a newsletter entitled Salud which helps to inform the community about legal aid, food stamp eligibility, nutrition tips and first aid information.

The students did a number of different tasks working on the building. Most students assisted carpenters in putting up insulation on the sides of buildings, building support beams, mixing cement, squaring sides of buildings, straightening nails, stacking wood, and putting on roofing material. Several students learned masonry skills in the basement of a building and two students worked on the repair of an engine for a tractor. Many of the people at the clinic and cooperative spoke both Spanish and English and were helpful in encouraging students to practice their Spanish. Discussions during the working day often focused on food stamps, land grants, farming, education and the importance of cooperative effort. Also, there was an opportunity to see some of the country around northern New Mexico which is truly beautiful.

The time spent in Tierra Amarilla was enlightening and rewarding for both teachers and students. One could not help but learn more about ourselves and our relationships to the others in the group and to the community. One of the most valuable parts of the experience was observing and taking part in active solutions to Chicano problems.

VII. St. Louis Module

"I found out where I was in the world of today's society. East St. Louis really brought out my true feelings. I found the people who really give a damn and also the ones who don't."

Excerpt from
student journal

St. Louis Module

Both experiences in St. Louis provided an intensive group experience. This was as a result of the confined living quarters in the cities. Activities included visits to local high schools, a black housing project, a neighborhood housing development center, a day in downtown St. Louis, visits to various community organizations and action-oriented groups, and attending various cultural activities.

These activities were successful in giving students an idea of what life is like in a big city, particularly in a poor community. Students returned to Denver more aware of urban life and urban problems. The experience in St. Louis also provided new perspectives on the students' understanding of Denver, Colorado.

VIII. Yampa-Green River Module

"It isn't just running the rapids. It's when you're through the rough waves and you feel the vastness of the river. Suddenly you know you are all just equal."

Excerpt from
student journal

Yampa-Green River Module

The students take a five-day float down the Yampa and Green River in Dinosaur National Monument. The area is rich in geologic formations Indian Art from the Fremont culture of 400 A.D. is found in many places in the canyons. Animal and plant life are abundant. The area is an excellent place for many types of learning experiences.

Floating through some of the oldest pre-Cambian sedimentary rock in continental United States, the students experience and sense the vastness of geologic time. The students stopped in various places looking for fossils in the different layers of rock. Students stopped at the Minten Park fault and observed the tremendous shift the rock has made. Other faults were visited on the trip but were not as dramatic as the Minten Park fault. The students visited Harper's corner which is an overlook of the grabben which brings the Weber sandstone down to the river's edge.

Leadership skills and confidence were developed as the students took turns captaining their raft through white water rapids. The group experience was heightened greatly by the fact that they needed each other to take the raft through the rapids.

The group experience was heightened by group cooking and campfire discussions relating the events of the day.

To heighten the group experience it is suggested the boat groups and cook groups should be the same.

IX. Eastern Culture Module

"The teachers didn't have to tell you what to learn. If you had an open mind, the lesson would come to you automatically. If you had a closed mind, the experiences quickly opened it up for you."

Excerpt from
student journal

Eastern Culture Module

Eastern Culture turned out to be a surprisingly powerful and exciting experience for the students. We had thought the questioning of a philosophy different from what most of us had experienced was a valid reason for this module, but had not anticipated the intense response which we received. We studied the following:

1. Transcendental Meditation
2. Hare Krishna
3. Various levels of Yoga Meditation
4. Confuscionism
5. Taoism
6. Hinduism
7. Buddism
8. Islam
9. Baha'i
10. Judaism

In comparing these so-called Eastern philosophies with so-called Western philosophies, the students discovered unexpected similarities. The discussions and papers were intense as we all tried to understand and appreciate cultures and beliefs different from ours, yet similar in religious goals. In "cognitive" terms, the students learned more than just fundamentals of the aforementioned religions. They also learned the philosophies and cultures which were produced by these religions. They learned that there is more than one way to look at life and death, and that devotion and dedication to religious ideals are not peculiarly Christian, or even prevalent among Christians as compared with other philosophies.

The students met and dealt effectively, by learning, with "cultural shock."

X. Communications Module

"We had an Englishman read stories to us. He read those stories and I didn't get those ten levels we were supposed to. But I got about two and felt accomplished. It takes time, I suppose, to understand these stories and I plan to read the books he told us about, and learn."

Excerpt from
student journal.

Communications Module
(Creative Writing)

The major stress of this module was to give students training in communicating with each other and the world in a variety of fashions. We felt that before one can communicate effectively with and understand others, one must be satisfied with oneself in the scheme of things. Therefore, our activities were structured around getting students to feel good about themselves and, thus, feel good about dealing with others.

We had exercises in trust, using the five senses, mental games, body language, writing, and verbal communication.

The students involved in this module became the embodiment of what we were trying to do. Without our directing it, or even anticipating it, they became a very close-knit group. This amazed us and the fact that this closeness continued through the rest of their experiences in Seminar convinced us of the value of this experience.

Along with nonverbal kinds of communication, we worked on writing. We looked at writing as a means of communication and a means of expressing creativity. Our students wrote poetry, sketches, short plays, essays, and even simple sentences, with direction toward mechanics, clarity and grace of expression. Their creative work, hopefully, will be published in the Denver Tomato, a publication of the Denver Public Library.

In addition, we talked with working playwrites, poets, and authors such as Hannah Green (I Never Promised You a Rose Garden and other) about techniques of writing creative works. While many good things came out of this module, I would ask further development of writing exercises and more emphasis on various kinds of nonverbal communications if the module is repeated.

I feel that, like the requirements of Power and Politics, there was a decidedly academic flavor to this module which most student appreciated. While some portions were weak, my experience with the module indicates that Seminar students are willing to accept a broader academic base into the scope of Seminar.

XI. Montana Module

"...dark green trees contrasting tall pastel grass surrounded by mist and nodding yellow flowers--tiny blue flowers creeping up through the moist brown soil--like Montana, the land is friendly."

Excerpt from a
student journal

Montana Module

This module provided an excellent end to Senior Seminar. The experience was one which allowed the group to draw together the various experiences of the semester. The module was a lesson in human ecology as well as physical ecology. We explored some of the problems of the physical ecology. We explored some of the problems of the physical environment in field experiments and our own group provided the laboratory for human ecology. Specific activities included water sampling at various spots on a large drainage system, a visit to the national bison range, and visiting Teakettle Mountain where an aluminum plant is located. We heard speakers on power development, timber management, and other environmentally oriented subjects.

We failed to teach as much about map and compass and astronomy as we would have liked. We failed because we had no organized plan to teach these activities. We also need to work harder to build primary groups of twelve in the total group of twenty-four so that each student will have a better forum for airing grievances as well as building feelings of group identity.

One of the most outstanding aspects of this module was the amount of time that was devoted to independent reading. I estimate that at least twenty of the students read at least one book, and at least eight of the students read at least two books. This experience convinced me that most of the students are interested in academic learning. The problem for the teacher, therefore, seems to be in finding learning environments that motivate students to want to learn. Many nights groups of students gathered and discussed Hermann Hesse's books, The Teachings of Don Juan, philosophy, ecology, and what one can do to be effective in changing society. This module shows that environments can be found where self-motivated learning can take place.

Without a doubt the learning and beauty of this experience indicate that it should definitely be repeated next year.

XII. Dance Module

"Mention ballet and instantly everyone's tongue pops out, yech! Culture! It always cracks me up that men are so wound up in their masculinity that they wouldn't take a step into any dance class--claiming anyone who did was a faggot. I wanted to see their faces when they found out this man ballet teacher was really a man!"

Excerpt from
student journal

Dance Module

This module was designed to give students an opportunity to participate in dance workshops in the hopes of students developing learning skills, techniques and disciplines involved in this performing art. Understanding and comparing dance as a form of worship, as an art form, as a response to music, and as a form of expression, it was hoped students would gain insight and personal satisfaction in participating in this type of self expression.

The students took part in a three-hour workshop at the Changing Scene Theatre, an experimental theatre attempting to fuse the performing and fine arts. As a prerequisite for the workshop, the students attended a performance at the theatre Sunday night. During the workshop the students did various warm-up exercises for limbering and strengthening our bodies. They learned techniques and skills of modern dance and had a chance to do some impromptu dance movements. The remainder of the workshop was spent on doing improvisations combining movement and recited poetry or prose. The experience was extremely successful in making students aware of the discipline involved in dance and broadening their understanding of dance as an art form. Students actively and enthusiastically participated in the improvisations, many overcoming fears of performing in front of others. Some gained self confidence in discovering their own talents and abilities in expressing themselves.

The students previewed and discussed two films in African dance, music, and art. They discussed the origins of musical instruments and the role of dance in their lives.

Another dance workshop at East with Pat McDonald taught some basic movements and techniques of ballet and modern dance. Small groups applied and performed their own interpretations of these techniques for the rest of the group. We spent a morning at a Voodoo Temple in Denver discussing and learning about dance and music as a form of prayer and reaffirmation of faith in the Voodoo religion. Students discussed and brought out many myths they had believed about the Voodoo church.

Dane Rossen, dance teacher at East did a workshop relating dance to jazz music. After many warm-up movements and exercises, students did some group improvisations stressing techniques of modern dance and relating this to music. Again the understanding of self-discipline involved in dance was stressed. At a luncheon at the Crusade for Justice, students observed children, age five through twenty, in a rehearsal of their Mexican dance group. They compared this type of dance to the modern and ballet they had seen and done.

The final workshop was at Temple Buell with Cleo Robinson and her dance group from Model Cities Cultural Arts Center. Students observed, while they rehearsed, some modern African ballet dances and then joined her dancers to learn some basic movements in African dance accompanied by congo drums.

Although the time (one week) seemed limited and planning time was rushed, the module was successful as a learning and growing experience for most students.

XIII. Students' Evaluation

"Seminar has meant more to me than anything I've ever done in my life. I'm really sorry it's all over. But I'm also happy.

Excerpt from
student journal

Student Evaluation

In this era of emphasis on accountability no project would be complete without the participants completing a comprehensive evaluation instrument. The Seminar was no expectation. Ninety-three of the one hundred students completed a detailed fifty-nine item questionnaire utilizing a five-point semantic differential scale as follows:

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The same questionnaire was submitted to a randomly selected control group of seniors at East High who did not participate in the Seminar. There were thirty-one respondents in the control group.

Compilation of the data was done by the Computer Center at the University of Colorado.

In addition, Students were required to keep personal journals of their experiences during Seminar. Comments taken from journals are included where they help illustrate the question being asked in the questionnaire.

1. There were enough opportunities for me to help in the planning of my learning experience this semester

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	26 (27%)	44 (47%)	7 (7%)	12 (12%)	4 (4%)
Control	2 (6%	10 (32%)	3 (9%)	11 (35%)	5 (16%)

Seventy-one per cent of the Seminar students felt there were enough opportunities to help in the planning of their learning experiences. Only eight per cent of the control group shared this feeling. The wide differences are indicative of the level of involvement of Seminar students in their learning activities. ("If you truly do what you feel is right, people will learn you have pride in yourself. With that inner pride you can be on top of the world." --Comment from Seminar Student journal.)

2. I feel that I did <u>not</u> have enough power in making decisions about my education this semester.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	3 (3%)	17 (18%)	4 (4%)	37 (39%)	32 (34%)
Control	7 (22%)	9 (29%)	3 (9%)	7 (22%)	5 (16%)

Putting the question in another form, only three per cent of the Seminar students felt strongly about not having enough to say about their education during the Seminar. However, 22% of the control group felt they did not have enough decision making power. ("There was to be a party that night, but neither Zsa Zsa nor I wanted to go. So we asked permission to go for a walk and went to the University (of Sonora)." --Excerpt from student journal.)

3. The freedom provided me in learning experiences this semester was sufficient.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	52 (55%)	34 (36%)	1 (1%)	6 (6%)	0
Control	4 (12%)	9 (29%)	7 (22%)	6 (19%)	5 (16%)

Ninety-one per cent of the Seminar students viewed the freedom provided them in learning as sufficient. Less than half of this number, 41% in the control group, felt there was sufficient freedom provided at East. ("God, I didn't know that sheep were so filthy--they are about the filthiest animals that I have ever seen. The people are nice--the food is good and you work your ass off." -- Comment from student journal)

4. My learning experiences this semester were too restrictive.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	3 (3%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)	27 (29%)	57 (61%)
Control	7)24%)	6 (20%)	5 (17%)	7 (24%)	4 (13%)

One fourth of the students in the control group felt their learning experiences at East were too restrictive. Conversely 61% of the Seminar students strongly disagreed when asked if they felt their learning experiences were excessively restrictive. ("I went to the student dance after school (in St. Louis). It was different because the dances are done different than in Denver. I learned some new dances. The names are Old Man, Rock Steady and Ged Clampett. I really enjoyed myself." --from student journal.)

5. I tried to help plan my educational experiences when the opportunity was available.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	31 (34%)	42 (46%)	11 (12%)	5 (5%)	2 (2%)
Control	14 (45%)	9 (25%)	4 (12%)	2 (6%)	3 (9%)

When asked if they tried to help plan their educational experiences, 80% of the Seminar students indicated they had. Seventy per cent of the control group felt they had tried to do so at East High.

6. The teachers I had this semester were concerned about me as a person.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	47 (50%)	36 (38%)	3 (3%)	6 (6%)	1 (1%)
Control	4 (16%)	11 (35%)	4 (12%)	5 (16%)	6 (19%)

A strong endorsement for the teachers in the Seminar was revealed when 88% of the Seminar students indicated they felt Seminar teachers were concerned about them as individuals. Fifty-one per cent of the control group also felt teachers were concerned about them as individuals.

7. The teachers I had knew how to make subject matter interesting.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	35 (38%)	49 (54%)	7 (7%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
Control	0	12 (40%)	4 (13%)	10 (33%)	4 (13%)

Ninety-two per cent of the Seminar students felt their teachers knew how to make subject matter interesting. Forty per cent of the control group felt their teachers made the subject matter interesting. ("I like the way Wayne (Seminar teacher) makes you think." --Excerpt from student journal.)

8. Most of this semester's teachers are trying to understand the racial problems that exist at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	39 (41%)	34 (36%)	11 (11%)	8 (8%)	1 (1%)
Control	2 (6%)	11 (36%)	8 (26%)	5 (16%)	4 (13%)

Three-fourths of the Seminar students indicated their teachers tried to understand the existing racial problems at East. Forty-two per cent of the control group felt their teachers at East were trying to understand racial problems at East.

9. I feel that I had enough opportunities to talk with my teachers this semester

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	54 (58%)	30 (32%)	3 (3%)	5 (5%)	0
Control	6 (20%)	8 (26%)	2 (6%)	7 (23%)	7 (23%)

One of the strengths of the Seminar was indicated by the large majority of students (90%) who said they had enough opportunities to talk with their teachers. The control group had 46% of the students who felt they had sufficient opportunities to talk to their teachers. ("I could talk to Peggy, I asked her everything. And I liked her. Not that I don't like the others (teachers) but they are just somewhere else." --Student journal.)

10. I have been able to develop more meaningful significant relationships with teachers this semester than I have before.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	57 (61%)	26 (28%)	2 (2%)	6 (6%)	2 (2%)
Control	2 (6%)	6 (20%)	5 (16%)	11 (36%)	6 (20%)

Eighty-nine per cent of the Seminar students felt they were able to develop more meaningful relationships with teachers than before. By contrast, 26% of the control group feel they developed more significant relationships with their teachers. ("I am really coming into the fact that all people have something to teach me. If I close myself off or put up a prejudice against someone, I miss what they have to offer. I am finding out I only hurt myself when I do these things." --Student journal.)

11. The relationships I had with teachers this semester have helped me to grow in a positive direction.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	51 (54%	29 (31%)	9 (9%)	4 (4%)	0
Control	2 (6%)	8 (27%)	7 (24%)	7 (24%)	5 (17%)

The strong positive influence of the Seminar teachers was indicated by a large majority (85%) of the students. The control group showed 33% of the students holding the view that their teachers helped them grow in a positive direction. ("To quote Jim (Seminar teacher) 'Not everything good in life is comfortable' --I pondered on that for quite some time. I liked it, that's for sure. It surely will be something I will remember." --Excerpt from student journal.)

12. The teachers I had this semester were willing to spend extra time to make my educational experiences more meaningful.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	46 (49%)	33 (35%)	9 (9%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)
Control	4 (13%)	9 (30%)	2 (6%)	9 (30%)	6 (20%)

Here again, the contrast between the Seminar and control group is dramatic. Forty-six per cent of the Seminar students felt their teachers were willing to spend extra time with them. Thirteen per cent of the control group perceived their teachers as willing to spend extra time with them.

13. The learning experiences I had at East this semester helped me to mature more than I would have if I hadn't been in school

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	72 (78%)	10 (10%)	8 (8%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
Control	3 (10%)	5 (16%)	8 (26%)	4 (13%)	10 (33%)

Again, the contrast between Seminar and control group is revealing Seventy-eight per cent of the Seminar group indicated they were helped to mature more than if they hadn't been in school. The control group showed 10% of the students holding this view. ("I feel that I am finding myself more and more these days. This trip and all of the other experiences I have had so far have been showing me that I have to have myself together." --Student Comment.)

14. As a result of my school experiences, this semester, I understand myself better than before.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	55 (59%)	27 (29%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)	1 (1%)
Control	3 (10%)	8 (26%)	5 (16%)	6 (20%)	8 (26%)

The depth of self understanding achieved by students in the Seminar exceeded that of the control group by a six to one ratio. It is in the area of self understanding that the positive values of the Seminar seem to be outstanding. ("I am really beginning to understand that before I can teach, help or love, etc. anyone else I have to have myself together." --Student comment.)

15. My attendance this semester was better than previous semesters.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	68 (73%)	12 (12%)	8 (8%)	1 (1%)	4 (4%)
Control	4 (13%)	7 (24%)	2 (6%)	5 (17%)	11 (37%)

Attendance in urban high schools continues to be a perplexing problem for both teachers and parents. The Seminar seemed to get at this problem to some extent since almost three-fourths of the students strongly agreed that their attendance in Seminar was better than in previous semesters. By way of contrast 13% of the control group thought their attendance better. ("Today I talked with a few people from the Power and Politics module. They seemed to have learned a great deal. It's sad we couldn't have been able to experience both Urban Arts and Power and Politics" -- Student comment.)

16. When I did miss school it was usually because of:

	Boredom	Illness	Home Duties	Something better to do	Other
SS	17 (19%)	31 (35%)	7 (7%)	21 (23%)	12 (13%)
Control	5 (12%)	3 (7%)	1 (2%)	15 (37%)	16 (40%)

The reasons for missing school varied somewhat between Seminar and the control group. Thirty-five per cent of the Seminar students indicated when they were absent it was due to illness-where as only seven per cent of the control group gave this reason. Other than illness, the Seminar students indicated no particular reason for their absence from Seminar.

17. I have a better understanding of what I might be doing in life than I did before this semester.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	40 (43%)	30 (32%)	13 (14%)	7 (7%)	2 (2%)
Control	4 (13%)	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	9 (30%)	6 (20%)

Three-fourths of the Seminar participants felt they had a better understanding of what they might be doing in life. Forty-six per cent of the control group shared this feeling. ("If it had not been for Seminar, I'd be sinking in a sea of darkness, whirlpools, danger and nothingness..." Student Comment.)

18. I have a better understanding of what my real potentials are as a result of this semester's work.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	33 (35%)	42 (45%)	12 (12%)	6 (6%)	1 (1%)
Control	0	7 (23%)	3 (10%)	11 (36%)	9 (30%)

Slightly more than one-third of the Seminar students viewed themselves as better understanding their own potential after Seminar. The control group did not have a single student who felt strongly that he had a better understanding of his potential after the regular semester at East High. ("From my experiences in Seminar, I have learned that I have a particular self purpose in life." --Student comment.)

19. The educational experiences provided me this semester have had a significant effect on my goals for the future.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	35 (37%)	39 (41%)	13 (13%)	6 (6%)	0
Control	0	4 (13%)	3 (10%)	11 (37%)	11 (37%)

More than three-fourths of the Seminar students indicated their experiences had had a significant effect of their goals for the future. By way of contrast, 13% of the control group viewed their last semester at East as having a significant effect on their goals for the future. ("Seeing all of these different fields (of work) that one can go in to really does give you ideas for the future, hope too. At least some people can survive and be happy and make dinero without having a 9 to 5 job. See Mom, it can be done." --Student comment."

20. I really don't think I changed much during this semester at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	3 (3%	9 (9%)	6 (6%)	24 (25%)	51 (54%)
Control	10 (34%)	5 (17%)	6 (20%)	5 (17%)	4 (13%)

Seventy-nine per cent of the Seminar students did not agree when it was suggested that they really didn't change much during the Seminar. This would suggest most students in Seminar view it as a change experience for them. ("I am beginning to care less and less about what people think of me and the way I act. I am not trying to fit in so much anymore. I am finding that being myself is what I want." --Comment from Seminar student's journa.)

21. I can understand my parents better than I did before this semester.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	28 (30%)	45 (45%)	9 (9%)	9 (9%)	0
Control	3 (10%)	6 (21%)	5 (17%)	14 (50%)	0

Seventy-nine per cent of the Seminar students felt their parents understood them better after Seminar than before. Thirty-one per cent of the control group felt their parents understood them better after the semester at East than before. ("Morning, I rose and walked down the beach. I thought awhile about my family and how much they would love the beach." --Excerpt from student journal.)

22. I relate better to my parents than I did before this semester.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	26 (28%)	25 (27%)	20 (21%)	12 (13%)	9 (9%)
Control	2 (6%)	5 (16%)	6 (20%)	5 (16%)	12 (40%)

Over half of the Seminar students felt they related better to their parents after completing Seminar. Less than one-fourth of the control group felt they related better to their parents after completing the semester at East than before. ("I bought an iron wood snake for my mom, I think she'll appreciate it. She's a pretty neat person. You know it really bothers me to have her worry so much. But she's always going to do it, so I"ll just have to get used to it." --Excerpt from student journal.)

23. The experiences provided me at East this semester have helped me to better understand racial problems.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	37 (39%)	39 (41%)	12 (12%)	4 (4%)	1 (1%)
Control	4 (13%)	5 (16%)	5 (16%)	7 (23%)	9 (30%)

One emphasis of the Seminar was a conscious effort to place students in situations where they would have ample opportunities to better understand racial problems. When asked if the Seminar did, in fact, provide these experiences, 80% of the students indicated that it did. When control students were asked the same question about their experiences, 29% indicated their experience helped them to better understand racial problems. ("I am getting rid of my old stereotypes of the Indians. Indians are not small and weak like on TV. To the contrary, they are strong." --Comment from student journal.)

24. The number of friends I have among different racial groups has increased this year.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	44 (51%)	23 (26%)	17 (19%)	2 (2%)	0
Control	9 (30%)	8 (26%)	3 (10%)	4 (13%)	6 (20%)

Another indicator concerning racial relations is an increase or decrease in friends among friends made among different racial groups. Seventy-seven percent of Seminar group indicated their number of friends had increased while 56% of the control group held the same view. ("Today we visited Vashon High (black high school in St. Louis). Before I left I was a little shaky, but after awhile my fears left me. The teachers and the kids I talked to were really nice." --Excerpt from student journal.)

25. I find that I talk to more people of different racial background than I did before this semester.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	45 (48%)	27 (29%)	14 (15%)	6 (6%)	1 (1%)
Control	3 (10%)	7 (23%)	5 (16%)	7 (23%)	8 (26%)

Again, focusing on racial relations, 77% of the Seminar indicated they talk more to racially different people than they did before. Thirty-three per cent of the control group felt they talked to more people of different racial background than before. ("Tonight we had hassles. It was mostly seeing to the needs of the blacks and the whites. Each race has different ideas about what they would like to do as a group. We just argue and end up in our own little groups. I'm especially guilty of this." -- Excerpt from a student journal.)

26. My experiences this semester have broadened my understanding of different cultures.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	63 (67%)	26 (27%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)	0
Control	3 (10%)	9 (30%)	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)

One emphasis of Seminar is to expose students to different cultures. It was not surprising, therefore, that 94% of them felt their experiences during Seminar broadened their understanding of different cultures. In contrast 40% of the control students viewed their final semester at East as broadening their other culture understandings. ("When coming into the culture so new (to me) and vast, I sensed strength all around. It never ceased. Amazing, but the steps they take to live life are simple and basic--only necessity brings them to use each day. The necessity being to build their lives with their land." --Comment from Seminar student.)

27. I had enough opportunities to build close personal relationships with other students this semester.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	67 (72%)	20 (21%)	3 (3%)	3 (3%)	0
Control	4 (13%)	8 (26%)	4 (13%)	5 (16%)	9 (30%)

Building closer personal relationships with other students should be a forte of the Seminar--and indeed, 91% of the Seminar students felt they had opportunities to do so. Thirty-nine per cent of the control students felt they had enough opportunities to build close personal relationships. ("I never thought I would feel a togetherness with any group like I felt there (in Mexico). It is impossible to write about that feeling. It is so deep." --Student comment.)

28. I feel that the students I worked with at school this semester were interested in me and my problems.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	30 (32%)	37 (39%)	19 (20%)	6 (6%)	1 (1%)
Control	2 (6%)	6 (20%)	6 (20%)	7 (23%)	9 (30%)

The question of whether your fellow students are interested in you as a person is a perplexing one at best. However, 71% of the Seminar students felt their peers were interested in them as individuals. Twenty-six per cent of the control students shared the same feeling. ("I got up there and pretented I was in my dancing class and our drummer was pounding away. When I finished, I was sure no one would speak to me. Think I was too weird--but they did speak to me. I had confidence. I told them it was easy. A breeze." --Student comment.)

29. I spent less time helping other students at East this semester than in previous semesters.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	3 (3%)	8 (8%)	22 (23%)	27 (29%)	33(35%)
Control	7 (23%)	8 (26%)	3 (10%)	6 (20%)	6 (20%)

Turning the previous questions back on the students, we find 64% of the Seminar students disagreeing with the suggestion that they spent less time helping others in Seminar than before. Forty per cent of the control students also disagreed. ("I met a girl from Southwest (high school) today that seemed to be middle class or upper middle. She does very well grade wise. She seemed to me a little afraid of people. This is a strange thought to me. I have begun to get very interested in people this trip." --Student comment.)

30. Most of the whites I had experiences with this semester were racist.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	1 (1%)	3 (3%)	21 (22%)	16 (17%)	52 (55%)
Control	0	6 (20%)	6 (20%)	10 (33%)	8 (26%)

Continuing with questions relating to race relations, we find only 4% of the Seminar students viewing whites they had experiences with as being racist, whereas 20% of the control students felt the students they

had experiences with at East were racist. ("Right now I feel helpless. In a sense I feel as though I'm being blamed for not seeing to the black needs. I've learned that from this St. Louis module and it is more clear to me how the white man has screwed the blacks." --Excerpt from student journal.)

31. Most of the blacks I came in contact with this semester are broad minded racially.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	12 (13%)	41 (45%)	18 (20%)	15 (16%)	4 (4%)
Control	2 (6%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)	13 (43%)	4 (13%)

While both items 30 and 31 could be regarded as loaded, since item 30 makes negative suggestions about whites and item 31 makes positive suggestions about blacks, it is worth noting that 58% of the Seminar students had a positive feeling about the blacks they had contact with. Nineteen per cent of the control group at East shared this positive feeling. ("The people (blacks in St. Louis) I've met so far are into a whole different trip than I'm used to. Like I live my life to live, these people live their lives to survive." --Excerpt from student journal.

32. I made closer friendships with other students this semester than ever before.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	49 (53%)	31 (33%)	6 (6%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)
Control	5 (16%)	5 (16%)	5 (16%)	7 (23%)	8 (26%)

A strong endorsement of Seminar is suggested by the number of students (88%) who indicated they had made closer friendships during Seminar than <u>ever</u> before. Thirty-two per cent of the control students also indicated they made best friends during their last semester at East. ("I have kept myself closed off from the world too long. I am finding out more and more that people are really cool. I am starting to enjoy people." --Comment from Seminar student journal)

33. I feel that I worked harder in learning experiences this semester than I did in previous semesters at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	58 (62%)	25 (26%)	5 (5%)	4 (4%)	1 (1%)
Control	3 (10%)	6 (20%)	4 (13%)	6 (20%)	11 (36%)

A continuing question concerning the Seminar is one of how hard the students really work during their learning experiences. If their responses to the question of how hard they work is considered, we find 88% of them indicating they did, in fact, work harder than during previous semesters at East. Thirty per cent of the control group indicated they had worked harder too. ("My Indian mother couldn't speak any English, but we communicated with each other through the children. I never will forget them. I learned so much from them." --Excerpt from student journal.)

34. The things I studied this semester will have helped me to adjust to modern city life.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	24 (25%)	44 (47%)	18 (19%)	5 (5%)	2 (2%)
Control	1 (3%)	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)	11 (36%)

Seventy-two per cent of the Seminar students indicated the things they studied helped them to adjust to modern city life. Of the control group, 26% felt the things they studied at East helped them to adjust to the city. ("I am finding that I have to get into the workings of the government if I want to see any changes. I mean that after seeing and listening to people that do things to better cities--that if people want changes--they have to change them instead of letting 'them' do it." Comment from Seminar student journal.)

35. The learning experiences I had this semester built upon those things I learned before.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	27 (32%)	40 (43%)	10 (10%)	11 (11%)	3 (3%)
Control	6 (20%)	10 (33%)	6 (20%)	2 (6%)	6 (20%)

Three-fourths of the Seminar students felt their learning in Seminar built on things learned before. Fifty-three per cent of the control students also shared this feeling. ("Today we went to the quarry at Dinosaur National Monument. There was a very interesting display of the geological time eras and the existing life at each time. I was immediately shocked to find that I had studied many of the same things in biology last semester and, therefore, I could relate to the previous knowledge." - Comment from student journal.)

36. My school experiences this semester have helped me to prepare for life in the modern world.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	39 (41%)	35 (37%)	14 (15%)	5 (5%)	0
Control	2 (6%)	5 (16%)	7 (23%)	6 (20%)	10 (33%)

Whether a 17 year-old can somehow know what experiences he is going to need to prepare him for the modern world is an interesting question. However, as Seminar students perceive their needed preparatory experiences, 78% of them felt the Seminar did indeed provide them with the aforementioned experience. Twenty-two per cent of the control group at East felt their experiences helped them prepare for life in the modern world. ("I've learned a lot about life and myself. It's going to be that way--learning and growing--for the rest of my life." --Student comment.)

37. I found the things I studied this semester generally interesting.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	67 (72%)	26 (27%)	0	0	0
Control	3 (10%)	10 (33%)	4 (13%)	9 (30%)	4 (13%)

As far as the Seminar students were concerned, the things they studied were definitely interesting since 97% of them indicated they were interested in the things they studied. The level of interest among control group participants was at 43%. ("An afternoon at the Voodoo Temple in Denver, I expected weird people with little dolls and pins. I was wrong, but not totally wrong. They did have what many would consider weird beliefs in Gods and certain ways of life, but the black priest seemed to me to have his head really straightened out." --Comment from Seminar student journal.)

38. I was more apathetic about learning this semester than in previous semesters.

	SD	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	14 (15%)	9 (9%)	7 (7%)	14 (15%)	48 (52%)
Control	9 (37%)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	6 (25%)	3 (12%)

Turning the previous question around, we find 24% of the Seminar students feeling more apathetic about learning during Seminar than before. Nearly half (49%) of the control group felt less enthusiastic about learning than before. ("City problems like pollution never bothered me before. Seminar turned me on to the fact that they are my problems too, and I better do something about them before it is too late." --Student comment.)

39. My understanding of current issues and problems was increased this semester.

	SD	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	48 (51%)	33 (35%)	6 (6%)	5 (5%)	1 (1%)
Control	3 (10%)	10 (34%)	4 (13%)	6 (20%)	6 (20%)

Seminar students, in convincing numbers (86%), felt their understanding of current issues and problems was increased. Forty-four per cent of the control students also felt their understanding of current issues and problems was increased. ("Almost 100 per cent of them (Navajo youth) leave--there's nothing there for them. But quite a few come back because, when they get out in the world, they can't cope with a competitive society like ours." --Student comment.)

40. As a result of this semester's work I have a better understanding of possible solutions to current local and national problems.

	SD	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	31 (33%)	43 (46%)	12 (12%)	7 (7%)	0
Control	0	6 (20%)	8 (26%)	8 (26%)	8 (26%)

By the same token, 79% of the Seminar students felt they had a better understanding of possible solutions to current domestic problems. Twenty per cent of the control students also felt they had a better understanding of possible solutions to current local and national problems. ("I found out where I was needed in the world or today's society. East St. Louis really brought out my true feelings. I found the people who really give a damn and also the ones who don't." --Student comment.)

41. I feel that I learned more in school this semester than I would have if I had stayed out of school.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	70 (75%)	16 (17%)	5 (5%)	0	2 (2%)
Control	4 (13%)	10 (33%)	4 (13%)	4 (13%)	8 (26%)

Ninety-two per cent of the Seminar students felt they learned more in Seminar than if they had stayed out of school. Half that number (46%) of the control group also felt they learned more at East than if they had stayed out of school. ("I've reached a point in my life where I understand a lot more things and now I feel I know where I am going--and have the strength and determination to get there." --Comment from student journal.)

42. I feel that I should have learned more academically this semester.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	4 (4%)	18 (19%)	18 (19%)	20 (21%)	32 (34%)
Control	8 (27%)	7 (24%)	5 (17%)	4 (13%)	5 (17%)

Twenty-three per cent of the Seminar students felt they should have learned more academically than they did in Seminar. Slightly more than half (51%) of the control students also felt they should have learned more academically than they did at East. ("Morning and afternoon--learning to take samples of water--can really get into that--would like to continue into it." --Excerpt from student journal.)

43. Because of this semester at East, I have decided to:

	Attend college	Attend trade school	Stay out of school	Join the service	Work
SS	57 (72%)	10 (12%)	1 (1%)	3 (3%)	8 (10%)
Control	14 (60%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	5 (21%)

While this item does not allow for the student who had previous to seminar--already decided to go to college--it does point up some interesting differences in career aspirations that the participants attribute to Seminar. Seventy-two per cent indicated their desire to go to college was related to the Seminar experience and 12% indicated their desire to attend a trade school was related to the Seminar. ("I never wanted to go to college before but you can bet I'm going now. I'm realizing more and more how helpless we are, I think now the only away we can help ourselves is through education." --Excerpt from student journal.)

44. Students in the Seminar communicated with each other better than students in the regular program at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	71 (78%)	14 (15%)	2 (2%)	3 (3%)	0

As expected, 93% of the Seminar students felt they communicated better with fellow Seminar students than with non-Seminar people. ("I've gotten closer than ever before to people in a learning situation. I've discovered new depths in feeling and understanding people." --Excerpt from student journal.)

45. I read more in the Seminar than I did at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	24 (26%)	25 (27%)	16 (17%)	20 (22%)	5 (5%)

Prevalent among the questions raised by parents about Seminar was whether the students were doing adequate reading. When asked the question about reading, slightly more than half (53%) of the students indicated they read more in Seminar than they had read previously at East. ("We heard an Englishman read stories to us. He read those stories and I didn't get those ten levels we were supposed to. But I got about two and felt accomplished. It takes time, I suppose to understand these stories, and I plan to read the books he told us about and learn." -- Excerpt from student journal.)

46. The Outward Bound course in Mexico helped me to grow in some positive way.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	60 (66%)	14 (16%)	5 (5%)	1 (1%)	0

In view of the universal popularity of the Outward Bound-Mexico experience between both Seminar students and their parents, it was not surprising that 92% of the students viewed the Mexico trip as helping them to grow in some positive way. ("I feel that the Mexico module was the most important module of the Seminar. I learned to appreciate the people around me although I may have disliked them." -- Excerpt from student journal.)

47. The Outward Bound course should be retained as a part of the Seminar.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	76 (84%)	4 (4%)	5 (5%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)

In harmony with the enthusiastic response on the previous question concerning the Outward Bound-Mexico experience, a large majority (88%) of the Seminar students felt this experience should be retained as a part of the Seminar. ("In eight days we saw the ocean, swam in it and washed in it, built fires by it, slept by it and ran along its shores. We also climbed a mountain range. In the same eight days we were also alone for 48 hours, surviving only with matches, a canteen of water, a sleeping bag and toilet paper." --Excerpt from student journal.)

48. Students in the Seminar have had enough opportunity to plan the modules.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	16 (17%)	27 (28%)	15 (15%)	28 (29%)	8 (8%)

Slightly less than half (45%) of the Seminar students felt they had enough opportunity to help plan modules. While this is a substantial number, it does reflect the need for additional student involvement in module planning.

49. Students in the Seminar did not have enough power in making decisions.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	4 (4%)	29 (30%)	14 (14%)	26 (27%)	17 (18%)

Reflecting their views on the previous question concerning involvement in planning, 34% of the Seminar students felt they did not have enough power in decision making.

50. The Seminar gives students more control over their education than the regular program at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	56 (62%)	30 (33%)	3 (3%)	0	1 (1%)

While the Seminar students were less than enthusiastic about their involvement in planning and decision making in the Seminar--when they compared their participation in these matters in Seminar with those at East, Seminar received a strong endorsement. Ninety-five per cent of the Seminar students felt they had more control over their education than they did in the regular program at East. ("The work we did was pretty strenuous--but nice to have something hard to do. Mike (fellow student) and I stayed up pretty late and talked. We have much to say and much in common in our feelings and thinking." -- Student comment.)

51. I wrote less in the Seminar than I would have if I had stayed at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	9 (10%)	25 (27%)	15 (16%)	23 (25%)	18 (20%)

Another lingering concern about the Seminar is how much writing students manage to get done with the emphasis being on experiential education. Slightly more than one-third (35%) of the Seminar students did, in fact, agree that they did less writing during Seminar than before. By the same token, 46% disagreed--and said they did more writing. It is clear that writing experiences do need more attention from the Seminar Staff.

52. I feel that I learned more in the Seminar than I would have if I had taken a regular program at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	79 (88%)	9 (10%)	1 (1%)	0	0

In response to a general question about the amount of learning in Seminar and the amount of learning in the regular program at East, the students were almost unanimous (98%) in supporting the Seminar as the most productive learning experience. ("The mountains, ocean, beach, solo, live-in, river, dancing, acting, plastic furniture, environmental disasters, city--these are only classifications and the minutest part of the experience. Each module gave new thoughts and ideas. Each opened a new world to explore." --Excerpt from student journal.)

53. The poor planning of the Outward Bound course made it a failure for me.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	7 (7%)	15 (16%)	62 (68%)

Even though this item is loaded in that it makes an assumption about planning in the Outward Bound-Mexico experience, the Seminar students disagreed with the assumption and by a large majority (84%). The students indicated that the "poor" planning did not make the experience a failure.

54. I have attended Seminar sessions more regularly than I attended school at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	58 (65%)	11 (12%)	11 (12%)	3 (3%)	5 (5%)

As mentioned earlier, attendance in urban high schools--East being no exception--has suffered as students and apparently parents seem to be placing less importance on being in school. We find a strong endorsement for the Seminar as far as attendance is concerned where 77% of the students indicated they attend Seminar sessions more regularly than school at East. ("Eddie mentioned that fourth hour was just beginning (at East). I'm glad I'm here. Denver was really getting me down." --Excerpt from student journal.)

55. Seminar teachers were more interested in me as a person than were the teachers at East.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	60 (66%)	20 (22%)	7 (7%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)

If teachers' interest in students is a measure of the quality of experiences the participants are receiving, the Seminar comes out with flying colors. When asked if their Seminar teachers were more interested in them than their regular teachers at East 88% indicated they thought they were.

56. Learning first hand in the Seminar has been more valuable than learning at the regular classroom

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	74 (84%)	13 (14%)	1 (1%)	0	0

When asked to consider the value of their learning in Seminar as compared with that of the regular classroom at East, an overwhelming majority of the students (98%) regarded their Seminar learning as more valuable. ("The teachers didn't have to tell you what to learn. If you had an open mind, the lesson would come to you automatically. If you had a closed mind, the experiences quickly opened it up for you." --Student comment.)

57. I feel that I have made the personal contributions necessary to make the Seminar a success.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	48 (53%)	35 (38%)	5 (5%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)

The Seminar is somewhat unique among high school programs in that it requires a personal commitment from students both from a money standpoint, i.e., helping raise funds, and from the viewpoint of time, i.e., the students must make a large time commitment in order to participate. When asked if they felt they had made sufficient contributions to make the Seminar a success, 91% indicated they thought they had done so.

58. I feel that the Seminar should be continued next year.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	89 (98%)	0	0	0	1 (1%)

It would be surprising if the Seminar students were other than enthusiastic about continuing the program next year. Student response to the question was indeed supportive. Ninety-eight per cent agreed it should be continued. ("The Seminar has meant more to me than anything I've ever done in my life. I'm really sorry it's all over. But, I'm also happy." --Excerpt from a student journal.)

59. I don't think I really changed much as a result of the Seminar.

	SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
SS	1 (1%)	6 (6%)	5 (5%)	14 (15%)	62 (70%)

Another strong endorsement for the Seminar came in the form of response from students when asked if they changed as a result of participating. Seventy-five per cent felt they had changed--hopefully for the better. ("Today I had quite a few hang ups. People just piss me off. Sometimes I don't even think they are for real. But today I learned a lot. I learned and found that sometimes I was almost a fool." -- Excerpt from student journal.)

XIV. Parents' Evaluation

"Our daughter has been looking forward to Senior Seminar since she was in ninth grade. She didn't give up even though she was the 11th alternate white girl on the list of Seniors for Seminar. She did the marathon and all the prerequired work necessary before the final list was made up. This effort alone was a good sign of the drive and a will to win or at least to help Seminar to succeed so great was her faith in the good of the Seminar.

She was not in the least disappointed. The trip to Mexico still has it's exciting flavor of adventure for all of us when she speaks of it. Her Spanish improved to the point where she plans on taking college Spanish for its continued influence in her life.

The visit of the Mexican students to our homes proved to be very educational to us and should be a yearly experience for us all.

The Urban Arts and the Multimedium programs which she chose opened up new vistas of cultural experiences right in her own back yard. This proved exciting and challenging to her and will and has enabled her to seek and find satisfaction in knowing where to go and how to do these activities outside the classroom walls. Actually there were things she was able to learn about that classroom requirements prevented her from taking.

Going to the Indian reservation was like going into a history book and learning to live at the "grass roots" level. Making everything you need with ones hands was a truly valuable experience and proof that it can and is done.

I think she might feel guilty about not wanting to go to St. Louis, but we were glad she had the choice.

And what can a parent say about their child's experience "on the River?" She lights up and glows when she speaks of it and one feels that she really has learned the lesson of self-reliance.

Of course, she has nothing but the highest regard for and the greatest confidence in those wonderful counselors and teachers, but I still feel she learned the lesson and I am sure it was from them.

We have had a very happy semester and Seminar came just in time as I believe that last year of high school is the hardest to stick out and she was tiring fast.

But now she is really looking forward to college where she was dubious before.

We are very grateful to East and the Seminar teachers for their many hours of planning and service that enabled out daughter to see how to live a fuller life."

Parent Comment.

Parent's Evaluation

Questionnaires were sent to the parents of all Seminar students. Forty-nine, almost one half, responded. Following is an item by item analysis of parent response. The respondents were asked to indicate their thinking on a five-point semantic differential scale as following:

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The number of respondents appears below each description and the percentage that number is of those responding appears to the right in parenthesis.

In addition, there were spaces for comments on each of the items. Sample comments have been added following each item to help the reader better understand parent viewpoints.

1. I believe my child learned more through the Senior Seminar than he would have in the regular program at East.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
32 (65%)	15 (30%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0

Ninety-five per cent of the parents responding either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that their children learned more in the Seminar--a strong endorsement for the program. ("It's more the quality, variety and kind of setting he learned in than quantity." --Parent Comment.)

2. From what I was able to see, I think the Senior Seminar is an effective way to learn.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
39 (79%)	8 (16%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0

Again, slightly more than eight of ten (85%) of those responding felt the Seminar an effective way of learning. ("I think my child learned more from the different experiences on Seminar than he would have in the regular program at East." --Parent Comment.)

3. I don't think there were enough reading assignments in the Seminar.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
11 (22%)	16 (32%)	10 (20%)	6 (12%)	6 (12%)

One parent concern about the Seminar is expressed here since slightly more than half (52%) either strongly or somewhat agreed that there were not enough reading assignments. ("The mobile library on the school bus was especially worthwhile for my son." --Parent Comment.)

4. Students in the Seminar should have had more writing assignments.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
7 (14%)	17 (35%)	9 (18%)	11 (22%)	4 (8%)

Here again we find nearly half (49%) of those responding expressing their concern about the quantity of writing assignments in Seminar. ("Our daughter especially enjoyed the creative writing module, and keeping a journal faithfully has been rewarding."--Parent Comment.)

5. My child did as much or more reading and writing as he did while in the regular program at East.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
3 (6%)	14 (28%)	8 (16%)	20 (40%)	4 (8%)

In harmony with the two previous questions, 48% of the parents indicated their children did not do as much or more reading and writing as they did while in the regular program at East. ("I think more reading should have been done for preparation from the out-of-town and in-town studies." --Parent Comment.)

6. I believe my child received enough personal attention throughout the Seminar.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
31 (65%)	8 (17%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)

One strong dimension of the seminar emerges in the response to this item where 82% of the parents responding felt their children received adequate personal attention during Seminar. ("I feel my son was given personal attention throughout the Seminar." --Parent Comment.)

7. My child should have received more special help in academic work during the Seminar.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
7 (14%)	4 (8%)	9 (19%)	11 (23%)	16 (34%)

Parent support for the learning style (concern for individual students) developed in the seminar is shown in that 57% felt their children did not need additional academic help during the seminar.

8. The Senior Seminar has helped orient my child to college.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
14 (29%)	13 (27%)	11 (23%)	7 (14%)	2 (4%)

Slightly more than half (56%) of those responding saw the seminar as helping orient their children to college. While we were hoping the positive response would have been higher on this item, it is important to note than many, if not most, of the students already were oriented to college before they entered the program. ("She was not going (to college) but now shw wants to." --Parent Comment.)

9. The Seminar opened new directions for my child to pursue in college or work.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
19 (41%)	16 (34%)	6 (6%)	4 (4%)	1 (2%)

Three-fourths of those responding felt the Seminar opened new directions for their children in terms of the type of college work they will pursue. ("New directions, yes--but more than that, the self confidence needed to find her own direction." --Parent comment.)

10. The schedule of the Senior Seminar was more jumbled than it should have been.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
6 (12%)	17 (35%)	12 (20%)	9 (18%)	6 (12%)

In order to maintain the spontaneity and high student interest, the Seminar schedule was very flexible--last minute cancellations or bus trouble immediately effecting a change of schedule. The parents responding apparently were not aware of the problems when nearly half of them (47%) indicated they felt the schedule was more jumbled than it should have been. ("The schedule seemed a bit disjointed to us at times--but not to Tom." --Parent Comment.)

11. Even though the schedule was unpredictable, it was worth it.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
33 (71%)	10 (21%)	3 (6%)	0	1 (2%)

An overwhelming number of parents (92%) felt the unpredictable schedule was worth the trouble. ("Too much organization and planning can take away more than it benefits." --Parent comment.)

12. The irregularity of the meeting time created hardship.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
5 (10%)	10 (20%)	10 (20%)	6 (12%)	17 (35%)

Not quite half (45%) of those responding viewed the irregularity of scheduling as creating a hardship. It seems quite clear from items 10, 11, ans 12, that the parents were a bit frustrated yet supportive of the flexibility in the Seminar schedule. ("The inequalities were good preparation for 'real' living." --Parent Comment.)

13. The Senior Seminar had my child out of town more than necessary.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
2 (4%)	0	5 (10%)	3 (6%)	36 (78%)

One continuing concern of the Seminar planners was that parents would feel the out-of-town experiences were excessive. It is obvious from the response to the above that the fears were unfounded, since 84% of those responding expressed no concern. ("What a good set of experiences--how great to be out-of-town and away from home when you're 17!" --Parent Comment.)

14. The Seminar cost too much.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
5 (10%)	5 (10%)	6 (12%)	6 (12%)	26 (54%)

Cost, especially for the less affluent parents, is always a major concern. However, only 20% of those responding viewed the cost as excessive. ("The cost was worth it, but I would have preferred having a much clearer idea of expenses before it all got underway." --Parent comment.)

15. I had sufficient information of Seminar schedules for my needs.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
17 (34%)	17 (34%)	2 (4%)	6 (12%)	7 (14%)

Again, the scheduling question and predictably--the parents indicate little apprehension about it. Only 19% felt they did not have sufficient schedule information. ("Out-of-town trip schedules were very good, but there was confusion at times concerning Denver modules, especially right after a field trip." --Parent comment.

16. The Seminar has helped my child understand positive ways to bring change to our society.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
21 (43%)	20 (41%)	4 (8%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)

A strong endorsement for the Seminar is found in the parent response to the question of positive affect of Seminar on their children. Eighty-five per cent saw their children as being helped to understand positive ways to bring about change in society. ("More significant, probably, is her new awareness of <u>needs</u> for change--rather than ways." --Parent Comment.)

17. My child has developed unnecessarily negative attitudes about society as a result of the Seminar.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
0	4 (2%)	4 (8%)	5 (10%)	35 (72%)

Another strong endorsement for the Seminar was indicated by parents concerning attitudes of their children about society. Eighty-two per cent did not agree with the suggestion that the Seminar developed negative attitudes about society. ("My son already had negative attitudes (toward society). I think the seminar helped bring him back into the society in which he must live." --Parent comment.)

18. Senior Seminar has helped my child to develop a desire to work for improvements in our community.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
22 (35%)	26 (38%)	5 (8%)	10 (16%)	1 (1%)

Community awareness, developed by in town modules is reflected in the response to this item. Eighty-three per cent of the parents responding viewed the Seminar as developing a desire to work for improvements in the community. ("It is difficult to determine (development of desire to improve community)--but I think he's in a process of accelerated self development right now." --Parent Comment.)

19. The Seminar has created a feeling of futility within the current system.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
2 (3%)	5 (7%)	11 (16%)	4 (6%)	24 (36%)

Little evidence was found to support the idea that the Seminar created a feeling of futility toward the system. Only 17% of the parents responding held the opposing view. ("Seminar probably generated more comprehension of how such futile feelings arise." --Parent comment.)

20. The Seminar has done nothing to foster better understanding between people.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
1 (2%)	0	4 (8%)	6 (12%)	37 (77%)

Seminar parents were strong in their feeling about the Seminar's affect on creating better understanding between people. Eighty-nine per cent of those responding felt better understanding was fostered by the Seminar. ("To the contrary, it has done much for our daughter--both on a person-to-person level and between different cultures." --Parent comment.)

21. I think my child has grown in his understanding of himself as a result of Seminar activities.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
36 (75%)	12 (25%)	0	0	0

All the parents responding, 100%, viewed the Seminar as aiding their children in understanding themselves. This is a very strong endorsement from parents who often are dismayed by the lack by the lack of self understanding demonstrated by their children. ("He is much more outgoing--ready to engage in conversation with anyone anywhere and always ready to listen and comment." --Parent comment.)

22. My child's attitude toward school was more positive during the Seminar than it was during the regular program at East.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
27 (57%)	9 (19%)	4 (8%)	3 (6%)	4 (8%)

Here again, we find strong endorsement from parents concerning positive attitudes toward school. More than three-fourths (76%) of those responding discerned an improvement in attitude toward school during Seminar. ("Lisa was happy and enthusiastic about school for the first time in years." --Parent comment.)

23. My child stayed away from the Senior Seminar sessions more than he missed school before.

SA	SWA	NO	SWD	SD
3 (6%)	2 (4%)	7 (14%)	2 (4%)	33 (70%)

Absenteeism is becoming an acute problem in urban schools and East High is no exception. Nearly three-fourths (74%) of those responded did not feel that participation in Seminar brought about increased absences. ("The Seminar sessions were so appealing she was eager to attend, in contrast to some of the classes she attended during the regular school year." --Parent comment.)

Conclusion

If we keep in mind the current wave of negativism toward the public schools that prevails among parents, the response of parents to the Seminar is especially significant. Therefore, it would appear most difficult to conceive a program that could muster more support than the Senior Seminar at East High. While it can be said that the half of parents who did not respond might have done so negatively, thereby changing the results, it is safe to say that had their negative feelings been sufficiently strong, they too would have responded to the questionnaire.

The parents who responded have answered the persistent questions in a positive manner, i.e., is Seminar really worth it? Is the cost too great? Does it really make a difference in the lives of the students who participate?

A critical observer can only conclude that Seminar, as viewed by the parents, is a dynamic new force in the lives of the youngsters who participated.

Conclusion

After being immersed in stacks of questionnaires and student journals for weeks on end, one gains an appreciation of the difficulty of an attempt to capture on paper the spirit of the Seminar. Recognizing this limitation, it is difficult to imagine a group of high school students expressing (via the questionnaire) more enthusiasm about their learning experiences. The students' project is the feeling that it is their Seminar--that it is something special to be a part of it--and that being a part of it makes you something special.

Student response to the items in the questionnaire was consistently positive. One gets the feeling that the students feel the need to defend the Seminar--as if it might not be around next year and they don't want that to happen. One girl wrote in her journal about not sleeping for two nights being so excited about whether or not she would be chosen to be on Seminar.

Reading through student journals is probably the best way to get a feel for the program. Insights into feelings about themselves, about blacks or whites, how they felt about living with another family--about their teachers--their parents--their insecurities--love, hate--they let it all hang out in their journals. It is in journal entries that the hassles come to the surface--black-white friction--the teacher doesn't think I'm important--a boy friend who doesn't care anymore--a dad who is dead and for the first time the girl realizes she loved him. The extremes of emotions we expect of teenagers are all found in the journal writings and serve to remind adults of the intensity of the feelings our young people have at this age.

Enthusiasm for Seminar was not limited to the students. Their parents also reflected a strong positive view of the program. While not as overwhelming in their enthusiasm, the parents generally felt their sons and daughters were a part of an exciting, experience-oriented learning program.

Suggestions for Strengthening the Seminar

1. Commitment from the school district.

   Each year the Seminar has operated on short term planning due to questions about whether the program would be continued the next year. This evaluation shows a strong positive reaction to the Seminar from both students and parents. The Seminar deserves a long term commitment from the school district--it has earned it.

2. Curriculum materials developed specifically for the Seminar.

   Seminar teachers should be employed as curriculum writers for a summer to develop learning experiences for Seminar students. The present approach of simultaneous development and implementation places too much strain on the staff.

3. Communication with parents.

   Tell them, tell them, tell them and tell them again! Communication theorists are saying that we make a mistake when we assume people understand a new idea simply because they heard it or read about it once. A rather large number of the parents felt they didn't understand what was going on in Seminar, therefore, every means of communication should be used including a newsletter, memos, phone calls, etc. Many times it is necessary to give the same message two or three times before we can be sure most people understand.

4. Communication with faculty.*

   The Seminar has brought considerable recognition to East High and rightly so. More faculty members, however, need to be involved in one way or another. Only through involvement will it become "our" Seminar as far as the East High faculty is concerned.

   *Note: While this recommendation was not derived from data in this study, it does come from frequent informal discussions with East High personnel and, in the evaluator's opinion, is too important to omit.